Notice of Public Meeting – (As required by G.L. c. 30A, c §18-25)

DEPT./BOARD: School Committee – SPECIAL MEETING
DATE: March 5, 2019
TIME: 7:00 p.m.
PLACE: School Committee Room, 123 Cambridge Street, Burlington, MA

AGENDA*

1. FY19 Financial Update
2. FY20 Budget – Curriculum, Health Services, IT, Library, Maintenance, Custodial
3. Warrant Articles – First Reading
4. School Transportation – Draft Bid Specifications
5. Adjournment

*Agenda subject to change
Chairman Russo called this special meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:00 p.m. in the School Committee Room, Administration Offices, 123 Cambridge Street, Burlington, Massachusetts. Present: Mrs. Christine Monaco, Mr. Stephen Nelson, Mr. Thomas F. Murphy, Jr. and Ms. Martha Simon. Superintendent Eric Conti, Asst. Superintendent Patrick Larkin, Business Manager Nichole Coscia, and Director of Operations Bob Cunha also present. Ways & Means members present: Sue Harrigan, Diane Creedon, John Iler, Nick Priest and Jaya Voruganti.

**Moment of Silence**

A moment of silence was observed on the passing of teacher Dr. Marie Chesnick a staff member at the middle school for 24 years. Condolences were offered to her family.

**FY20 Budget**

Curriculum

By consensus, these items were taken out of order. Mr. Larkin explained that the FY20 Curriculum budget request on page 31 is up 14.85% an increase of $47,795 for a total of $361,800. The largest increases in the areas of supplies which includes a copier, BPScon lunch, and ELL supplies. Contracted services also show an increase due to rising enrollments and ELL licenses. It was suggested that the We Are Burlington be included in the May town meeting packet. Mr. Larkin will check on DRA kits (if available).

**Health Services**

BPS Health Services¹ Nurse Leader Barbara Conley explained her budget was up 3% an increase of $3,000 for a total of $103,725. She then reviewed a powerpoint presentation of: primary nursing duties, additional nursing responsibilities, mandated Mass. Screening and data entry. Nurse visits for the 2017-18 school year were 25,926 in total, an increase of 12% from last year’s total visits. She then reviewed staffing to student ratios at each building and is requesting additional nursing staff to comply with Dept. of Public Health guidelines of 1 nurse per 500 students. One nursing position was cut last summer and she is requesting 3 additional nurses to meet the state staffing recommendations. She further explained to the Committee that if the school district does not increase nurse staffing ratios, it puts the renewal of the Administration of Epinephrine by Unlicensed School Personnel Certification in jeopardy of not being extended beyond June 30. Some concerns expressed by the Committee: potentially losing the ability for staff to administer epi-pens, nurse to student staffing ratios, complexity of student medical issues, and administering medications to students on field trips. In response to Mr. Iler, Dr. Conti replied that one new nurse position is in the FY20 budget.

**IT**

IT Manager Jose DeSousa stated that the IT budget request on page 109 is up 3.73% an increase of $17,060 for a total of $473,970. The increase of $17,060 is in the area of contracted services to repair students’ devices in kindergarten through grade 8; this was previously paid for out of the IT revolving fund. In response to Ms. Creedon, Mr. DeSousa explained that students in grades K-11 have iPads and only BHS students are permitted to take home iPads. Mr. Villano further explained that the IT department will see less of a monetary return in value for BHS student iPads as one grade currently has been provided with chromebooks.

**Library**

Director of Technology Integration Dennis Villa explained that the library budget is level funded next year with no increase for a total of $138,190.

**Maintenance**

The maintenance budget request is up 1.04% an increase of $6,514 for a total of $635,199. Mr. Nelson commented that $30,000 is budgeted for miscellaneous school building repairs next year. In response to Ms. Creedon, Ms. Coscia replied that the budget request for miscellaneous repairs of $209,000 is what has been spent historically.

**Custodial**

Ms. Coscia distributed a chart showing the cost of Custodial Supplies² for the past five years. The budget request for supplies next year shows an increase of $5,000 for a total of $155,000.

**School Transportation – Draft Bid Specifications**

By consensus, this item was taken out of order. Dr. Conti stated that the current school transportation bid concludes on June 30. A consultant was hired to review practices, processes, and efficiencies, as well as put together a five year transportation bid document. Mr. Rich LaBrie was introduced as the transportation consultant and he comprehensively

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¹ BPS Health Services
² Custodial Supplies
reviewed with the Committee the 85 page Specifications for Burlington Public Schools Transportation Bid. He explained that currently, Burlington has the lowest cost transportation contract among 35 Massachusetts school districts. He commented that the bid specs include: awarding the first year of the contract and then to increase it by using a COLA for each year of the contract and a fuel escalator clause for increase/decrease, changing insurance to include uninsured and underinsured vehicles as well as umbrella insurance. Mr. LaBrie also explained the bid specs include the requirement for buses to be no older than 10 years or 150,000 miles. Mr. Murphy commented it was good to have evidence that the current transportation contract is competitive and he explained that due to the budget cycle deadline, any increase in the transportation contract costs will be taken outside of the FY20 budget guideline.

Comments from the School Committee included: support for a 5 year contract, the COLA recommendation was a good point, and the current transportation provider is competitive. In response to a query, Mr. LaBrie explained that currently costs for special education student transportation are not in the bus bid specification. It’s anticipated that LABBB will provide all of the special education transportation, they’ll be cheaper, and a bid will go out separately from the current bid specs. In response to Ms. Creedon, Mr. LaBrie explained that route efficiencies are not in the bid and are expected to be completed in three weeks. Chairman Russo commented that the current transportation contractor provides training of drivers on the Heimlich procedure and safety, has seat belts, and students are not sitting on buses for 10 minutes prior to the start of school. Mr. LaBrie explained that state law only requires seat belts on short buses and on page 23 of the bid it requires the contractor to provide training in first aid, CPR, seizure, restraint training, and allergic/epi-pen administration. A discussion ensued regarding the requirement of seat belts and/or harnesses. Due to costs and the requirement for a contractor to purchase new buses, if seat belts aren’t available on their current fleet of buses, it was requested by the School Committee that a clause be included in the bid that any new buses purchased by the transportation contractor are required to be fitted with seat belts. At the present time, on preschool buses there are 6 five point seat belts in the first row. Pages 20 and 61 include a possible buildable menu of equipment requirements. In response to Ms. Creedon, Mr. LaBrie noted that the bus bid spec document will go out after the School Committee approves it and an addendum can be added by April 12.

Moved by Mr. Nelson and seconded by Mr. Murphy to approve the draft bid specification for discussion with the menu to include after executing the purchase of new buses they are required to include 2/3 point harnesses. Mr. Nelson subsequently withdrew this motion. Mr. Cunha recommended that the School Committee approve the bid specifications at the March 12 meeting and the bid specification document will be emailed to the Ways & Means subcommittee. Mr. LaBrie explained he’d like to advertise in the March 11 Goods & Services publication for the five-year Burlington Public Schools Transportation Bid, no specifications will be included but it will ensure the timeline will not need to be extended. Moved by Mr. Nelson and seconded by Mr. Murphy to allow the publication as advised by Mr. LaBrie that it’s Burlington Public Schools’ intent to go out to bid; motion carried 5-0-0.

Dr. Conti explained that the draft warrant articles contained 19 projects in no priority order with a total of $1,753,047. The School Department will be allotted $1.4 million for projects. Next week the Committee will receive back up materials; however he wanted the Committee to see the proposed requests. Mr. Cunha provided a brief background on each of the proposed projects:

- MSMS Cafeteria tables $65,000
- Police Walkie Talkies $105,000
- BHS Computer Lab $33,000
- Project Adventure $116,000
- FW Library Furniture $82,000
- Music Band Lockers $37,047
- CS4all Curriculum & Furniture $200,000
- PG Room Renovation $40,000
- MSMS Boiler Replacement $125,000
- FH Water Pumps $15,000
- PG Sewer Pump $14,000
- FW Air Conditioning Phase 3 $225,000
- FH Room Renovation $25,000
FW Bathrooms $140,000  
PG Interior Lighting & Ceiling Tiles $300,000  
MEM Interior Painting $50,000  
MSMS Interior Painting $50,000  
BHS Street Flooring Replacement $45,000  
BHS HVAC Design & Engineering $100,000  
TOTAL REQUEST $1,753,047

The Superintendent requested that Mr. Jackling review with the Committee the proposed Project Adventure request. Health Coordinator Matt Jackling provided a comprehensive overview of the proposed refurbishment of Project Adventure, an outdoor physical education course for over 25 years at BHS that was storm damaged in 2017. He further reviewed the background, curriculum, benefits of this BHS course, project cost estimates, and staff training. There are three possible outdoor location options on the BHS campus. Some School Committee comments were: the schools do a good job supporting the arts & music and we’d like to do something similar for physical ed as this course builds student confidence, self-esteem, and promotes team building. The Committee expressed support for this priority project and recommended the financial investment.

Dr. Conti requested that Mr. Villano and Ms. Tyrell explain to the Committee the proposed CS for all Curriculum. Director of Technology Integration Dennis Villano and Computer Science Teacher Shereen Tyrell reviewed this proposed new computer science course offering for the middle school and at the high school. The high school course will be offered in the former BayPath computer lab with three class sections. The middle school will develop a new computer science offering in grade 6, grade 7, and grade 8. The classes at the middle school will be in two tech ed rooms and a Mac lab. They are requesting $200,000 in warrant article funding to purchase technology equipment, furniture and supplies to implement the CS4All Computer Science curriculum. Mr. Villano and Ms. Tyrell are also applying for and writing grants for this new curriculum. In response to Mr. Nelson, Mr. Villano replied that a new middle school schedule is being drafted, current staffing are two Tech Ed teachers and one Computer Science teacher, there is no immediate need for new staff members, current staff will be retrained, course offerings will be updated and additional staff members will be needed over the next 4-5 years.

Mr. Cunha explained that he will increase the Community Custodial Warrant article by $1,700 and the Committee requested that Mr. Cunha include the community custodial warrant article funding request for the March 12 meeting.

**FY19 Financial Update**

Ms. Coscia provided a detailed review for the FY19 budget update noting that the lunch account is in deficit of $19,674 and Sprouts Daycare has a small positive balance but rates have recently been adjusted. The FY19 Operating budget has a remaining budget of $18,855,359 with $32,512,124 spent/encumbered. The projected year end surplus is anticipated to be $134,165 for the Operating budget and $105,748 surplus for the Accommodated budget.

In response to Eileen Sickler, Ms. Coscia replied that the remaining budget for tutors on page 2 line 27 is enough funding through year end on June 30. Ms. Coscia further explained that some tutors are grant funded and some tutors/teachers have been reclassified. Dr. Conti stated that these grants are managed by Special Education for student services and are federally funded. Dr. Conti will provide a list of grants, schedule, and federal funding. In response to Ms. Sickler, Dr. Conti replied that the deficit of $15,553 in the category of Custodian Vacation Leave will not affect the bottom line but Administration is watching it closely. The deficit for this line is due to custodians retiring mid-year. In response to Mrs. Monaco, Ms. Coscia replied that salaries are not encumbered. Mr. Murphy explained that the auditor had clarified about revolving account negative balances; the state statute is that the balance has to be positive at the end of the school year. Dr. Conti commented that the only possibility for a deficit balance would be in the school lunch account.

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3 The Value of Project Adventure  
4 CSforAll  
5 FY19 Budget Update
ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Mr. Murphy and seconded by Mr. Nelson at 10:40 p.m. to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Gilbert
Recording Secretary

Date submitted: 4/9/19
Date approved: 4/9/19